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ABSTRACT

This manual outlines the strategies used by the University of Minnesota Technical College (UMTC) to generate student and faculty support for its reading and writing tutorial program. The manual first outlines 20 factors that contribute to a successful reading program, such as the provision of student support services, the awarding of credit to students completing the program, and the provision of faculty status for program instructors. Next, the publicity efforts undertaken by UMTC to promote student awareness of the tutorial program are enumerated. These efforts included gaining the cooperation of journalism and radio students in writing ads; distributing posters and flyers; and involving student clubs and vocational classes in remodeling the reading laboratory, catering a local reading council banquet, and performing other service projects related to the reading program. Finally, the report outlines several ways of promoting faculty and administrative involvement, including: (1) holding inservice workshops about outreach services; (2) recruiting faculty volunteers for short videotape lectures; (3) cooperating with counseling staff; (4) publishing a study of the program's effects on student retention; (5) conducting a faculty/administrator evaluation of the program; and (6) providing assistance to faculty in writing and proofing grant proposals. Sample brochures and flyers are included. (JP)

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ED197790

BUILDING A SUPPORT BASE FOR A COLLEGE READING PROGRAM
THROUGH EFFECTIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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University of Minnesota Technical College
Crookston, Minnesota 56716

JC 810 086

ABSTRACT

"Building a Support Base for a College Reading Program Through Effective Public Relations"

There are many factors that contribute to a successful college reading program. However, if the program is to be a vital part of the college curriculum, the director must make the program visible. Ways to generate cooperation and support from students, faculty, and administrators are suggested. Examples of promotional flyers and advertisements are included.

Building a Support Base for a College Reading Program Through Effective Public Relations

There are many factors that contribute to a successful college reading program. Roueche and Snow (1978) in their book, Overcoming Learning Problems, discuss many of them:

1. Offer courses for credit in reading and study skills.
2. Use test batteries and a self-concept scale for diagnosis.
3. Reading courses need not be required, but should be strongly recommended by advisors if tests indicate reading problems. Courses can be required of students with extremely low deficiencies.
4. Provide a tutoring program for all academic subjects.
5. Provide a day-care center and transportation for students.
6. Provide a writing center.
7. Provide a mathematics center.
8. Provide a reading lab that content area classes can use.
9. There should be ongoing data on dropouts from school.
10. There should be pre and posttests in all courses and pre and posttests for some subject-area units when appropriate (library, note taking, etc.)
11. There should be training available in listening skills.
12. There should be multi-media orientation presentations for students.
13. All supportive services should be seen as vital.
14. There must be organizational support from recruitment people, advisors, testing people, courses and curriculum, and employers (jobs).
15. There should be evaluations of the college environment by students and faculty for feedback to decision makers.

16. Instructors in the reading center should have faculty status.
17. Counselors should be instructors in the classroom as part of their employment.
18. Recruitment should include students.
19. Peer counseling and tutoring should be supported.
20. Remember that the teacher is the key!

However, they emphasize that the teacher is the key to make these services exciting to students and to build a support base from faculty and administration. And if the teacher is to build this enthusiasm he or she needs to make the program visible as well as relevant; effective public relations are essential.

To generate cooperation and support for the University of Minnesota Technical College Reading, Writing, and Tutor programs, the staff developed some "marketing strategies" to publicize their services and to get students and faculty involved in the program.

STUDENT AWARENESS

1. The student campus newspaper was contacted. They were asked to help us develop some ads for their publication. With student input some excellent ideas were generated. An ad for each school month was drawn up. Students received extra credit for a special project in their newswriting course. (see examples 1 & 2)
2. Interviews about the Reading Center were conducted at the beginning of each quarter with the campus radio station. One student designed some short blurbs on our tutor program to use on the air. He applied this work to an assignment in his radio course.
3. Posters (blow ups from the newspaper ads) were distributed on campus periodically. Campus busses and restrooms have proved to be highly visible areas. (see example 3)

CHECK INTO FREE TUTORING



pull yourself together

Reading-Learning Center

Kiehle Building

281 - 6510 ext. 388

Hours - 8 - 4:30

TIME RUNNING OUT?

Don't wait for help. Ask about free tutoring.

Contact

Reading - Learning Center

Hours 8 - 4:30

Monday - Friday

Kiehle Building

281 - 6510 ext. 388



PLAY TO WIN!

FREE TUTORING IN ALL SUBJECTS

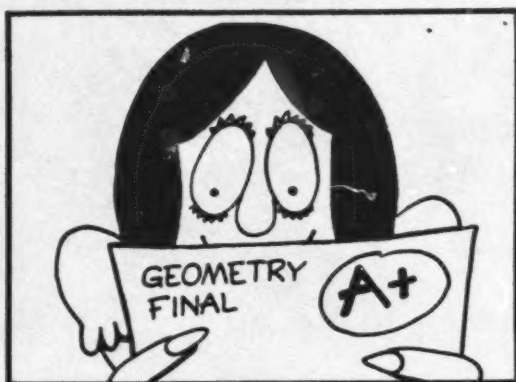
Contact: Reading-Learning Center

Kiehle Building

281-6510 ext. 388

Hours 8 - 4:30

4. A flyer on student services and courses offered on campus was designed and distributed to: 1) new students, 2) student lounges, 3) parents and 4) students inquiring through letters and visits to campus. (see example 4)
5. A flyer on the Writing Center was given to all freshmen composition students. (see example 5)
6. "Wanted Posters" were designed to recruit student tutors. We personally spoke to clubs, student senate, and athletic teams to get student leaders involved. We emphasized the benefits to them; developing leadership, good resume material, and getting paid. (see example 6)
7. A study file was set up in the Reading Center that included old tests, assignments, and flashcards. It was advertised in the student newspaper and was an excellent way to get students of all course majors in to see our center. A list of typists and examples of resumes and inquiry letters were made available. This also gave our program more visibility.
8. Several projects with students were initiated. The journalism class wrote a feature story on our services. The interior decorating class gave us advice on how to remodel the lab area to make it more accessible to students. The restaurant management class was asked to cater a local reading council banquet at our college.
9. Student clubs were contacted for service projects. The Horticulture Club decorated with plants and contracted to "keep them alive." The Home and Family Services Club helped sponsor a community bookfair with us. They provided workers and refreshments and took care of finances. The Student Senate was asked one quarter to donate funds



INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES FOR UMC STUDENTS

At UMC students are presented with many avenues for becoming involved in international experiences. Approximately 10 different countries are represented on the campus by students from foreign countries who are part of the college community.

UMC also sponsors student and faculty exchange programs with colleges in England, Scotland and Wales. Students participating in international study spend one, two or three quarters attending college at one of the campuses in the United Kingdom.

An international club consisting of American as well as foreign students is also active on the campus. The club holds periodic meetings and has many internationally oriented activities such as dinners and exhibitions.

For more information, write to the:

Office of Admissions
University of Minnesota - Crookston
Crookston, MN 56716
(218) 281-6510 ext. 369

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or handicap.

HELP for Students



University of Minnesota
Technical College
Crookston

EXAMPLE 4

DO ANY OF THESE STATEMENTS APPLY TO YOU?

I forget everything I've read ten minutes after I close the book.

Tests shake me up. I think at first that I know the material, but then I flunk the exam.



I've never had to do a real research paper... until now. Yuk!!

I think in Spanish. Can someone help me learn to write in English?

I'd like to be able to read faster.

There is never anything to do. Life is so BORING.

My spelling is awful!

I don't know what kind of a job I want.

I need to talk to someone. No one likes me, especially teachers.

I have to work to stay in school. When will I find time for studying?

How can I get a date?

If you know all too well about some of these situations, student services at UMC can help you.

READING - LEARNING CENTER (RLC)

Do you want to improve your reading and study skills?

The RLC offers these courses for credit:

Academic skills development in reading gives small group and one-to-one assistance in reading and writing;

Reading and study efficiency emphasizes careful reading and retention of textbook assignments, effective notetaking, improved reading comprehension and test-taking.

College speed-reading includes instruction on skimming and scanning and improving reading rate.





The Center also provides:

A drop-in service to give you advice on concerns such as test anxiety, spelling, or time management.

A study file to let you see old tests, worksheets, and flashcards from almost every course taught on campus.

The reading lab to allow you to work on reading skills on your own time and at your own pace.

Skills testing to help you determine your strengths and weaknesses in reading, vocabulary, spelling, listening and study skills.

The tutor program to give you individual help in any course. This service is free to all UMC students.

"THE WRITE PLACE"

How can this writing center help you?

"The Write Place" has drop-in assistance for writing assignments, research papers, resumes and letters. Special instruction in grammar and spelling is also available. This service is provided by the teaching staff of the Communications Department.

A **typing service** lists typists for papers and other assignments. The experienced typists identified in the directory are recommended by the Business Division.

What credit courses in writing are frequently offered?

Communication-Composition 1103*

Emphasizes writing from personal experience.

Communication-Interpersonal 1203*

Has units on reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Business Communication 1303*

Emphasizes writing business correspondence.

Technical Writing 1313*

Enables students to practice writing for technical reports.

English Grammar and Usage 1323*

Provides a review of the fundamentals of grammar, punctuation, and English usage.

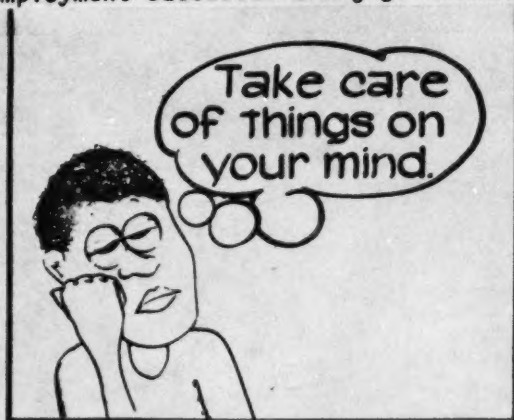
*3 credits



PLACEMENT CENTER

How can you take advantage of Placement Services?

UMC students can get assistance in finding employment both during college and after graduation. The placement service provides part-time and full-time job listings, sends placement credentials to prospective employers, and gives information on interviewing techniques, resume writing, and completion of job applications. This service is free and available 12 months a year. Over the past 12 years UMC has compiled an outstanding placement record and a long string of employment successes among graduates.



COUNSELING SERVICE

UMC has a staff of professionally trained counselors with strong and diversified educational backgrounds. Counselors are available to assist you at all hours of the day. You can confide your academic, vocational, and personal concerns to them privately and they will help you discover solutions. UMC counselors, you will soon discover, are nice people to get to know and useful too.

REGION I CAREER CENTER

How can the Center help you choose a career?

The Center can provide you with tools required in finding job interests, setting goals, exploring post-high school employment opportunities, and developing job-seeking skills. It is especially helpful for students, women, the unemployed, the handicapped, and those wanting a career change. A computer system contains the latest state and national occupational information. All services are free.

SPECIAL SERVICES FOR MINORITY STUDENTS

Personal, career and educational counseling is also yours for the asking if you are a minority or disadvantaged student. This service is readily available through the office of Special Student Programs.

Minority students are also encouraged to participate in UMC's Multi-Cultural Club. The club offers ample opportunities for ethnic expression and encourages appreciation of all national and multi-national cultures.

SERVICES FOR HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

All programs and services at UMC are made available to handicapped students. The community of Crookston and the University of Minnesota system provide resources to assist in serving all students with special needs.

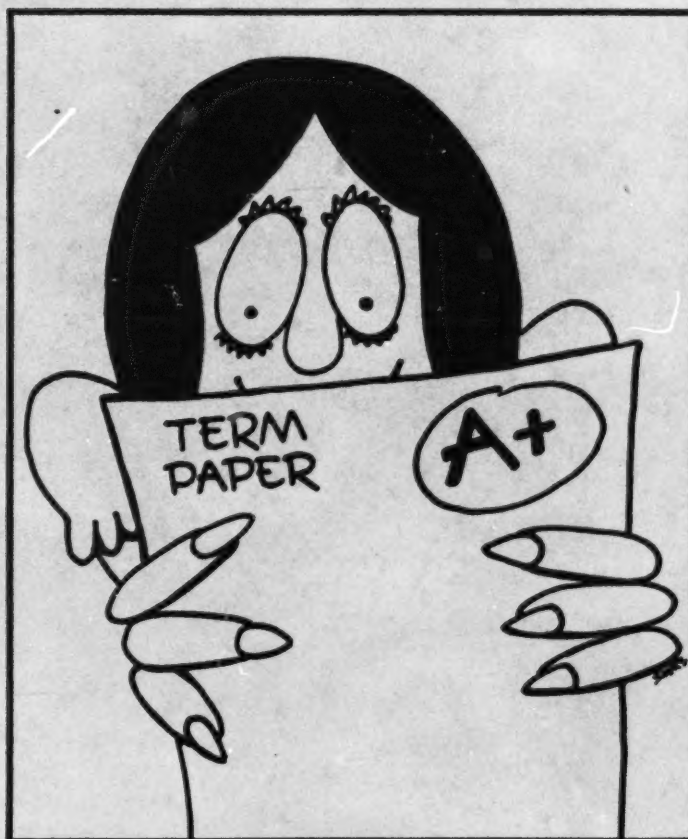
The college provides a flexible atmosphere to meet your special needs as well as those of your fellow students. Problems such as special diets, special classroom scheduling, and special housing arrangements, are dealt with and typically resolved on an individual basis.

THE WRITE PLACE



University of Minnesota–Crookston

EXAMPLE 5



The Write Place is a Center for all kinds of writing needs. It is a place to come with reports, research papers, writing assignments, resumes, job inquiries, or even love letters.

It is a place to come for improvement in spelling, grammar, organization, vocabulary, and research methods.

The staff consists of UMC Communication faculty and a Writing Place assistant. Hours are from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. in Room 127 in the Learning Resources Building (Kiehle) Dial - a - Grammarian Services are also available during office hours. Call 281-6510, ext. 437.

TO HELP YOU, THE WRITE PLACE HAS:

Helpful Handouts
Books in all writing areas
Dictionaries
Topic ideas
Examples of research papers
Examples of technical reports
Pamphlets on "How to Go About Writing Papers"
Self-instructional programs in spelling and vocabulary-
building
AND FRIENDLY STAFF



A reminder: One visit will usually provide your writing with first aid, but not with a cure. The more times you come, the more you can improve. Developing writing skills takes time.

(WATCH FOR OUR SIGNS ON CAMPUS)

AN "A" WRITING PAPER
(sung to the tune of "White Christmas")

I'm dreaming of an A paper,
One on a subject that I know,
Or a piece of fiction, with good clear diction,
And sentences that seem to flow.
Oh, I'm dreaming of a clear thesis,
One that's related to the theme.
Will I ever see one of these?
Or is it nothing more than just a dream?

from the Writing Lab
U of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

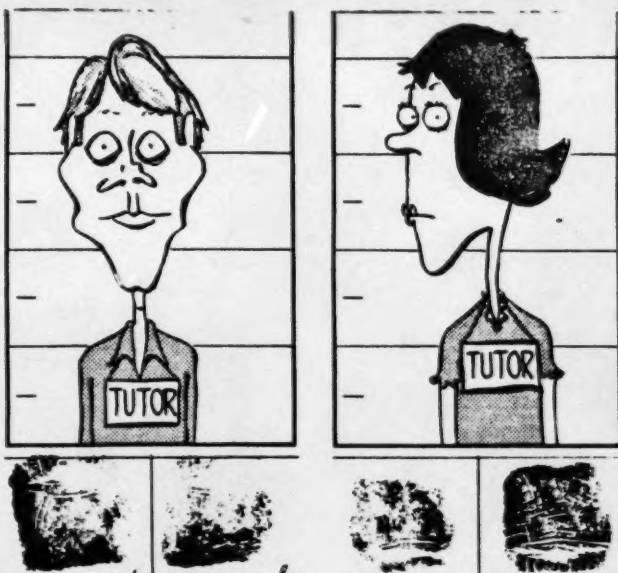
The General Education Division's "Write Place" has received partial funding from a University of Minnesota Educational Development Program grant.

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or handicap.

WANTED

Tutors For All Courses

APPLY TO: Ms. Gretchen Starks or Ms. Mary Larson
Reading Center - Kiehle Bulding
UMC
281-6510 extension 388



JOB TITLE:

UMC TUTOR

DESCRIPTION:

Tutors employed by the Reading Center will assist students in achieving academic success in their coursework.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Assist students having difficulty with course content.
2. Attend tutor training meetings.
3. Establish communications with the course instructor.
4. Abide by the rules and regulations of the Tutor Program.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Pleasant personality with high level of grooming, courtesy and punctuality.
2. Minimum grade point average of 2.75 in course tutored.
3. Knowledge of course content, preferably having completed the course on this campus.

PAY:

Current student rate

to the Tutor Program when the budget got low. This monetary investment also sparked awareness for our program. The Art Club has been contacted to contribute paintings and displays for the individual tutor rooms.

10. A display was set up in the Library showcase. Work-study students from the Reading Center were in charge.

FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION AWARENESS

1. Faculty inservices at the beginning of the school year was an excellent way to pass the word about our services. Ways in which the Reading Center could lend support to teaching were discussed.

Some of the outreach services mentioned were:

- A. One-hour sessions on the following topics presented by Reading Center staff:

Note-taking from lecture

Note-taking and underlining from textbooks (using class text)

Test-taking techniques

Remembering and memorization techniques

- B. One-half hour sessions on the following topics presented by Reading Center staff:

Previewing textbook chapters to aid comprehension

Finding a suitable place to study at UMC

Time management or time scheduling

What the Reading and Writing Centers have to offer

- C. Audio-visual programs on study skills are available to the instructor. Reading Center staff or the instructor can present them.

"Everything You Never Wanted to Know About Studying,
But Knew You Should Ask," 10 minutes

"Test Taking or How to Look Smarter Twice a Quarter,"
10 minutes

"Using Common Sense to Raise Your Test Scores," Part
I, II, and III, each 20 minutes

- D. Readabilities on textbooks to find the book's grade level are done by Reading Center staff. This is helpful when selecting a textbook or evaluating a current one.

- E. Diagnostic testing of students in reading, study skills, English grammar, and spelling for faculty advisors and counseling staff.

2. Faculty were asked to volunteer to do 15-minute videotape lectures for use in the note-taking unit for the study skills course. We now have a collection on a myriad of subjects from inoculating cattle (agriculture instructor) to adolescent sexuality (psychology instructor).
3. Cooperation with the counseling staff was initiated to help in presentations about the school at student orientation sessions, registration days and parent visitation days.

4. A study on retention was done in conjunction with the Student Affairs Office to determine if the study skills program affected student grade point average. Results were positive and published in the North Central College Reading Association 1980 Yearbook.
5. Faculty and administration evaluation of our program was initiated (see example 7). Our willingness to gather constructive data lent credibility and a positive attitude to our program.
6. The Writing Center advertised to help faculty proofread and write grant proposals. They also encouraged faculty to consult them on appropriate writing assignments for classes. A number of science instructors are now cooperating with staff on developing viable writing experiences for their courses.
7. Faculty advisors are contacted when students get deficiency slips or when reading tests, given during registration days, are low. This personal contact and discussion about student needs has helped us give quality education to our students.
8. A promotional audio-visual series to publicize the program and at the same time give some general study tips was developed. It is used now by admissions officers, counselors, instructors, and tutors in their work and classes.
9. The communications instructors bring their freshman composition classes in to the reading lab once a week as part of the course. They believe there is a definite link between reading and writing skills. As a group we developed some combined reading and writing assignments for use in a study skills class:

Determine paragraph shape from a writing assignment.

Predict test questions from lecture notes.

Write out practice tests for courses using your notes.

Analyze tests when they come back.

Assign research papers. (Information gathering from library, taking notes, documentation with bibliography entries.)

Summarize class notes.

Paraphrase terms and definitions from textbooks.

Predict essay questions for a course and write it out.

Write an essay on what you think your most pressing study problem is.

Write an essay on test anxiety.

Analyze student essays to see if they are answered directly or indirectly.

Analyze student essays for grammar and punctuation.

Use study guides for textbooks.

Write letters to appropriate people as outgrowth of class discussions.

Have students write essays analyzing their instructors as to voice clues, body clues, and word clues used in lecture.

Have students make marginal notes when underlining.

Have students collect data on a subject and write their conclusions.

Have students conduct interviews and write them up.

Have students evaluate course, course materials, and teaching methods in written form.

What has this outreach in public relations done for our Reading and Writing Center? The results are not statistically measured, but there is a definite feeling among our staff that it has been very beneficial.

On the student side, we have increased enrollment and the tutor program has doubled. We see students of all abilities using the facility - not just the remedial ones. We are often asked to help on student club sponsored activities and serve as advisors to various clubs. We write many employment recommendations.

Each quarter faculty ask us to visit their classes to give mini-sessions on study skills. We do many textbook readabilities. We have been asked to help produce promotional audio-visual series for other divisions. One instructor has asked us to team teach a course on hotel financial management as an adjunct course with one hour a week devoted to application of study skills to course content. We are consulted by faculty advisors and included in academic standing contracts for failing students. Campus tours always make a stop at our Center. We are asked to contribute to resident advisor training. We really feel a part of the college curriculum and see a definite commitment to our program by the institution.

FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE ON READING & STUDY SKILLS PROGRAM

Dear Faculty Member:

We are in the process of evaluating the reading and study skills program in terms of its effect on student grade point average, retention, and attitudes. We would appreciate your opinions and suggestions as a faculty member. Please return this form to the Reading Center by _____. Thank you for your cooperation.

Gretchen Starks and Anthony Kuznik

1. Do you feel that there is a positive effect of the reading and study skills program on your advisees' or UMC students' academic performance? Please indicate your feeling by circling the appropriate number.

1. Program is no good or worthless.
2. Program is of little help.
3. Program is "okay."
4. Program is quite helpful.
5. Program is very helpful.

2. Do you think that the reading and study skills program has a positive effect on attitudes towards college for UMC students? Please indicate your feeling by circling the appropriate number.

1. Program is no good or worthless.
2. Program is of little help.
3. Program is "okay."
4. Program is quite helpful.
5. Program is very helpful.

3. In your opinion, is the reading and study skills program worth the financial expense?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Maybe

4. In your opinion, is the tutor program worth the financial expense?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Maybe

5. How can we improve the reading and study skills program?

6. What do you feel is the largest problem students have with studying?

7. Where would you recommend that students study on campus?

8. Where would you recommend that students study off campus?

9. Any other comments:

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
96 Powell Library Building
University of California
Los Angeles, California 90024